

employees, or even their next new hire. Even colleges are searching online for information about people they are awarding scholarships to. Things posted in cyberspace are like a bad penny...they keep turning up.

- **Do not tweet about anything you wouldn't be comfortable seeing on a giant billboard.**

### ***Twitter safety advice for Kids:***

- Give yourself a nickname which is gender free. No one will know if they are writing to a boy or girl.
- Take a look at the images you've uploaded, including your background image. Do you think it gives away who you are?
- **As with any social networking site, do not give out personal information in any form.**
- **Make your updates private, so only you and your friends can see them.**
- **Do not ever accept a "Follow" request from someone you don't know.** It could be someone trying to sell you something or it could be someone trying to find out if you are a kid.
- Do not search for interesting looking new people who might be adults without checking it out with your parents first, so they know who you are following.
- Use good judgment when posting updates and realize that what you post stays there forever (even when you're offline).
- Do not post photos of yourself, embarrassing or otherwise. The whole world will be able to see them, including your parents.
- Do not respond to harassing tweets. Tell your parents if you are receiving these types of messages or if you are being bullied or threatened.
- Do not arrange to meet someone you've been corresponding with.
- Tell your parents or a trusted adult if any message makes you feel uncomfortable.
- If you think your parents don't know about Twitter, and you're interested, show them what it is. Be sensible and responsible.

Mesa Police  
Department  
Crime Prevention

# Twitter Safety



[www.mesaaz.gov/police](http://www.mesaaz.gov/police)

*A safe tweet is a happy tweet.*

**T**witter has been one of the fastest growing social networking tools. It is a free service that can help you stay connected with the people in your life via mobile texting, instant messaging or on the web. People can send or respond with short messages, or “tweets,” which are no more than 140 characters. However, just like any other social networking site, this one is also falling prey to scammers, imposters and would-be thieves.

By default, your Twitter profile is public and all your updates can be seen by anyone, without your permission. However, you can control who sees your Twitter messages by selecting the “Protect my Updates” box in the settings area. By doing so, your profile becomes private and only approved followers can see your updates. However, this does not hide your list of Following/Followers from public view, nor does it keep you safe from searches.

There are no specific security tools, but there are some simple steps that you can do to ensure a secure and safe Twitter experience without compromising your personal information.

### **Passwords**

- Change your password regularly. When online, you should change your password every 6-12 weeks. If you suspect that your password has been compromised, change it immediately.
- Be complex. Try to use a combination of letters (upper and lower case), numbers and special characters.
- Never give your password to anyone.

### **Posting**

- Do not share that you are going out somewhere. If you want to share where you’re going, tell people you’ve “just got back from...” This way, you aren’t telling the whole world that your home is empty.
- Do not tweet that you are going away for a trip or the weekend. No need to invite anyone to test how good your alarm system really is.
- It’s also not a good idea to share that your other family members (spouse, children) are home alone while you’re on a business trip, at a conference or

### **Passwords are like underwear...**

- Don't leave them out where people will see them.
- Change them regularly, and...
- Don't give them out!



hunting. Again, tell what a great trip you’ve “just got back from.” For example — a couple in Arizona tweeted about their great vacation (while on vacation) and came back to find their home burglarized.

- Do not let the world know you live alone. Do not advertise if you are looking for a roommate.
- Do not give out your location. One of your “followers” could turn out to be a stalker or sexual predator.
- In cyberspace, the 13-year-old kid you are tweeting with could actually be a 36-year-old guy who *really* wants to meet you.
- Employers are now turning to Google, Twitter and other social networking sites to check up on their